

Approved For Release 2002/02/11 : CIA-RDP77-00512R000100040136-4

DD/A 75-5452

17 NOV 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Communications
Director of Finance
Director of Joint Computer Support
Director of Logistics
Director of Medical Services
Director of Personnel
Director of Security
Director of Training

SUBJECT : Comparative Evaluations

1. Attached herewith is a copy of the newly approved descriptors for comparative evaluation. These will be helpful in the comparative evaluation process for your personnel in selecting employees for assignments, promotions, counseling, etc. Their acceptance should be considered as another step in bringing greater uniformity to Agency personnel management. They were developed by the Office of Personnel and the career management officers representing the Directorates.

2. These new descriptors, including the special listing for "Potential Surplus--Functions/Skills," are now in effect and should be made an integral part of your sub-group evaluation system. Please ensure that all members of your respective sub-groups are aware of these new descriptors. They should be considered a part of the Administration Directorate Personnel Management Handbook, Section III, paragraph 5 until such time as that Section can be amended to incorporate this addition.

3. The Administration Directorate Personnel Management Handbook requires evaluation of most personnel on an annual basis. This is considered a minimum and some Offices may prefer to have evaluations more frequently. Please notify the DDA/CMO's office of your schedule of evaluations.

/s/ John F. Blake

John F. Blake
Deputy Director
for
Administration

Attachment

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STATINTL

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Descriptors for Comparative Evaluation Groupings

Comparative evaluation rankings will be based specifically on performance, potential, and value to the functioning of the particular Career Service or Career Sub-Group involved. The comparative evaluation of employees will be considered in determining appropriate work assignments and career actions such as promotion, training, rotational assignments, counseling, and, if required, adverse actions such as downgrading or separation.

Evaluation systems serve multiple purposes which cannot be accomplished by competitive ranking alone but in which such rankings play an important role. Thus, the determination of employees to be promoted stems from consideration of comparative ranking, performance, the response made to letters of instruction, and the demonstration of capabilities to handle responsibilities to be undertaken.

The Agency has affirmed its adherence to a merit system for personnel actions; therefore, the underlying principle for comparative evaluation must be the relative merit or value of an employee on the basis of performance and manifestation of potential.

HIGHEST POTENTIAL (HP)

Employees whose experience, qualifications and excellent performance in assignments and training indicate that they have the highest potential for advancement. Career actions should utilize and further develop this potential.

MAY DEVELOP HIGH POTENTIAL (MD)

Employees whose qualifications and performance clearly are above average and who give indication that they later may demonstrate high potential for greater responsibility. Career actions (assignment, training, experience on the job) should enhance their skills and develop this potential.

VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION (VC)

Employees whose performance is good and who generally are realizing their potential. This category will include some employees who may be capable of performing at a higher level of responsibility and some who may not. Among those who may not are employees who are making a vital contribution to the functioning of their office (above average or satisfactory performance) and would continue to do so either in their present or a rotational assignment. Career management for employees in this grouping should provide sufficient opportunities for work satisfaction, improvement of skills, and personal growth at current levels of responsibility so that those who may have future potential have an opportunity to demonstrate it.

LIMITED POTENTIAL (LP)

Employees whose overall performance is adequate but who have some characteristic affecting knowledge or performance such that their potential is judged to be limited. Their career planning and counseling should consider whether there are measures which reasonably can be taken to assist them in overcoming such deficiencies, whether their talents can be utilized better in some other function or office, or whether they should be encouraged to seek career opportunities elsewhere.

SUBSTANDARD (SS)

Employees whose performance and potential are substandard in comparison with others of the same grade and occupational category. Requisite administrative actions may include, dependent on the procedures of the Career Service, notification, counseling, training and/or reassignment. Employees in this grouping are subject to downgrading or separation under the procedures specified by Agency regulations and the Career Service. In a surplus situation, employees so evaluated would have low priority for retention.

Special Listing for "Potential Surplus--Function/Skills"

Agency regulations and recent court decisions obligate us to differentiate between those employees who may be considered for separation on the grounds of substandard performance and those who are surplus because the Agency no longer requires their particular skills or functions.

After the Boards have completed the rankings of employees according to present value to the Career Service, the listings should be reviewed to asterisk those employees who come under the following categories for appropriate management action:

1. Are potentially surplus on the basis that their skills are no longer required by the organization, or
2. Are associated with functions to be reduced or eliminated, or
3. Cannot be flexible with respect to assignment (where such flexibility is required).

Employees who have reasonable prospect for reassignment or advancement without retraining should not be identified in this category. Employees may become potentially surplus because the Agency's needs for skills changes over time; when this happens, it poses a career management problem for the employee and the Agency to work out. Should separation be the most appropriate outcome, it should be under the procedure for the separation of surplus personnel and should bear no stigma of poor performance unless that has also occurred.